

Paraded Naked and Gang-Raped: The Persecution of Christians in India

by **Raymond Ibrahim**

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- "To add to the horror, four police officers reportedly stood by and watched as the frenzied attack unfolded, making no attempt to intervene." — Report, British Asian Christian Association, May 21, 2023.
- In the video, the [Hindu] Meitei tribal group can be heard shouting: "If you don't take off your clothes, we'll kill you." — Report, British Asian Christian Association, May 21, 2023.
- "In a disturbing twist, the survivors have alleged that the police officers may have actively participated in or facilitated the heinous attack. There are claims that the officers led the women directly to the mob of 800 to 1000 men" — Report, British Asian Christian Association, May 21, 2023.
- Several Christians—including a young child—were burned alive by the Hindu tribesmen, according to Morning Star News.
- Notably, both the Hindu government and the international press totally sideline the religious identity of both the attackers and the victims, and speak only of "sectarian clashes" between the Meitei (Hindu) and Kuki (Christian).
- This is a familiar tactic—as when the Western media talk of Fulani herdsmen clashing with farmers in Nigeria. In reality, the Fulani are

Muslims who are engaged in a genocidal jihad on the "farmers," who are Christian.

- It would appear that religion — specifically the rise of Hindu nationalism, which views ethnic Indians who are Christians as traitors — is, once again, the ultimate factor fueling clashes....
 - "Local police throughout India allow Hindu extremist mobs to attack hapless Christians without consequences." — Archbishop Joseph D'Souza of the Anglican Good Shepherd Church of India and President of the All India Christian Council, stream.org, July 21, 2023.
 - "At this point it is obvious to state that Kuki Christians are under full scale attack by radicalized Hindu groups, and that the police are ignoring this injustice." — thewire.in, July 20, 2023.
 - The growing persecution of Christians in India has even propelled that nation into being ranked the eleventh-worst country in the world to persecute Christians, according to the World Watch List.
 - Stripping Christian women naked, and publicly parading and gang raping them is just the start.
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The growing persecution of Christians in India has even propelled that nation into being ranked the eleventh-worst country in the world to persecute Christians, according to the World Watch List. Pictured: The remains of a burnt church in the village of Langching, in India's northeastern Manipur State, on May 31, 2023. (Photo by AFP via Getty Images)

A recent atrocity, [caught on video](#), highlights the horrific situation of Christian minorities in Hindu India.

According to one [report](#):

"The viral video captures the harrowing ordeal endured by two Christian women from Manipur. On May 4, 2023, the women were paraded naked while a mob of men molested and beat them mercilessly. Tragically, the younger woman, aged only 19, was brutally gang-raped by the enraged mob, which included members of the Meitei [Hindu] tribe. To add to the horror, four police officers reportedly stood by and watched as the frenzied attack unfolded, making no attempt to intervene.

"In the video the Meitei tribal group can be heard shouting: 'If you don't take off your clothes, we'll kill you.' The women are then publicly groped,

slapped and punched. The women can be heard pleading for mercy as they continually sob and groan in anguish.

"In a disturbing twist, the survivors have alleged that the police officers may have actively participated in or facilitated the heinous attack. There are claims that the officers led the women directly to the mob of 800 to 1000 men or were present during the assault. The tragic violence occurred after the women fled their village to hide in a forest after it had been razed to the ground by the Hindu Meitei. In search of safety, the women and three others encountered the police officers, who offered help but tragically led them into the hands of the violent mob.

"While the mob gang-raped the youngest woman publicly, her brother and father struggled to protect her. In the ensuing violence the two men were killed by the frenzied mob....

"The shocking incident took place amidst escalating ethnic clashes between the Meitei (Hindu) and Kuki (Christian) communities in Manipur."

Riots began after the Meitei people, who are mostly Hindu and form the majority of India's northeastern Manipur State, insisted on receiving the same status and benefits allotted by the government to the historically marginalized minority tribes of the state, one of which is the Christian Kuki (Protestant, mostly Baptists). When push came to shove, rioting erupted between the minority tribes and the majority Meitei, culminating with the Hindus rioting all throughout Manipur. As a **result**:

"At least 317 church buildings have been destroyed in the violence since May 3, according to local sources. The unrest has claimed more than 160 lives in the state, according to unofficial estimates, with official figures on June 2 putting the figure at 98 dead and 310 people injured; a disproportionate number were Christian tribal people, local sources said."

Several Christians—including a young **child**—were burned alive by the Hindu tribesmen. "They have no regard for women and children," a local **said**. "A woman was killed inside the church while she was praying, that's how merciless they are."

From the start of Meitei attacks in early May, the Indian government has been largely silent—speaking up only after the video of the two naked Christian women went viral

on July 19. On the following day, July 20, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi **expressed** his "outrage":

"I want to assure the nation, no guilty will be spared. Action will be taken according to the law. What happened to the daughters of Manipur can never be forgiven... [M]y heart is filled with pain and anger. The Manipur incident is shameful for any civilised nation. The entire country has been shamed."

As one **report** notes, however, "The first arrest, 77 days after the incident, was reported today [July 20], a day after the video went viral," and the same day Modi finally acknowledged the magnitude of what had been happening in Manipur.

As a **result**:

"Criticism has been directed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Manipur government for their delayed response to the incident. Only after the graphic video of the attack went viral did the Prime Minister address the issue, raising concerns about possible political motivations behind the belated reaction."

Notably, both the Hindu government and the international press totally sideline the religious identity of both the attackers and the victims, and speak only of "sectarian clashes" between the (Hindu) Meitei and (Christian) Kuki.

This is a familiar tactic — as when the Western media talk of Fulani herdsmen clashing with farmers in Nigeria. In reality, the Fulani are Muslims who are engaged in a **genocidal jihad** on the "farmers," who are Christian.

It would appear that religion — specifically the rise of Hindu nationalism, which views ethnic Indians who are Christians as traitors — is, once again, the ultimate factor fueling clashes in Manipur. "The mobs after burning churches were hoisting their flag on the top of the churches," a Kuki pastor **said** of the violence. "It is like they were trying to portray that they have conquered the church — the religious sacred place of our worship."

Similarly, after blaming the Manipur government and police of "complicity" in the "heinous violence," Archbishop Joseph D'Souza of the Anglican Good Shepherd Church of India and President of the All India Christian Council, **wrote**:

"This is indeed the state of affairs wherever minority Christians have been attacked in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and other states. Local police throughout India allow Hindu extremist mobs to attack hapless Christians without consequences.

"As the news of this violence emerges, the Christian identity of the Kuki population in Manipur fails to make the headlines. But Indian authorities can no longer deny the reality that this is a religious attack, and also a barbaric ethnic cleansing of a people group....

"The Chief Minister of Manipur — who has been sympathetic to the Meitei Hindu extremists — claiming there were **hundreds of similar incidents** on both sides is greatly misleading. When he speaks of unrest happening on both sides, he fails to mention that the vast majority of the victims are Kuki Christians.

"When the BJP Vice President of the neighboring State of Mizoram resigned, he stated that in his opinion the BJP has become an anti-Christian party. This has brought clearer awareness throughout India, and throughout the world, that the rapes and murders of numerous women, and the burning of homes and churches, clearly represent targeted attacks against Kuki Christians.

"At this point it is obvious to state that Kuki Christians are under full scale attack by radicalized Hindu groups, and that the police are ignoring this injustice. There is no denying the destruction of hundreds of churches, the massive number of displaced Kuki Christians, and the brutal rape of their women."

Or consider the **words** of Archbishop Dominic Lumon of Imphal:

"The revival of indigenous religion and the emergence of militia groups.... to protect their traditional religion (Sanamahism) and prevent the [supposed] onslaught of Christianity at all cost is a fact not known to many from outside of the State of Manipur. Reports are that Meitei Christians are warned with dire consequences if not returned to their original religion.

Some pastors have been indicated not to rebuild the churches. There is systematic silencing of minorities. Is this not another 'Ghar Wapsi'?"

"Ghar Wapsi" means "returning home." It is a reference to the ongoing program undertaken by various Hindu nationalist organizations to "convince" wayward Hindus who may have converted to Christianity or other religions to come "back home" to the state religion of Hinduism.

The growing persecution of Christians in India has even propelled that nation into being ranked the eleventh-worst country in the world to persecute Christians, according to the World Watch List. According to that [report](#):

"[I]n 2023, in some states [in India], it's a scary place to be a Christian.

"In recent years there has been a big increase in Hindutva, an ideology that believes only Hindus are true Indians, and that Christians, Muslims and other religious minorities have 'foreign' roots and must be expelled. Hindu extremists seem able to attack others with impunity, even using extreme violence in some parts of the country.

"Increasing numbers of states are implementing anti-conversion laws, supposedly to stop Hindus being forcibly converted to other religions, but in reality they are often used as an excuse to harass and intimidate Christians who are just doing things like distributing aid or having a private church meeting. These laws do not seem to protect Christians from being coerced back into Hinduism.

"Christians increasingly experience social exclusion in their communities, discrimination in the workplace, and have false accusations and rumours spread about them.

"The Christians most at risk are those who have come to faith from a Hindu background. In some parts of India, many face constant pressure to return to Hinduism, social exclusion, discrimination at work, physical assaults and are sometimes even killed. Church leaders are particularly vulnerable too; being a pastor is one of the riskiest vocations in the country today. Hindu extremists target them, their wives and children with violent attacks to sow fear in the wider Christian community."

The report designates the persecution experienced by Christians in India as "extreme" — the worst category possible. "Extreme" is the same designation used to describe the persecution that occurs in even the top three persecuting nations, [North Korea](#), [Somalia](#), and [Yemen](#), respectively.

Stripping Christian women naked, and publicly parading and gang raping them is just the start.

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